United Nations A/AC.109/2015/3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 February 2015

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Tokelau

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 20 January 2015. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

15-01449 (E) 230215

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: Tokelau is a Non-Self-Governing Territory, as defined under the Charter of the United Nations, administered by New Zealand.

Representative of administering Power: Jean Administrator Jonathan Kings.

Geography: Tokelau comprises three small atolls: Fakaofo, Nukunonu and Atafu. Each atoll comprises strips of land up to 200 m wide and not more than 5 m above sea level. Samoa, located 480 km to the south, is the nearest sizeable neighbour and the principal point of contact for Tokelau with the outside world.

Land area: 12.2 km^2.

Exclusive economic zone: 318,990 km^2.

Population: 1,411 (October 2011 census), as follows: Atafu — 482, Fakaofo — 490, Nukunonu — 397 and Samoa — 42 (Tokelau Public Service employees and their immediate families). Approximately 7,176 Tokelauans live in New Zealand (2013 Census). As New Zealand citizens, Tokelauans may also reside in Australia.

Life expectancy at birth: 69.1 years (female: 70.4 years; male: 67.8 years (2000-2009 estimates)).

Ethnic composition: Tokelauans are Polynesians with linguistic, family and cultural links with Samoa.

Languages: Tokelauan. English and Samoan are also widely used.

Capital: None. Each atoll has its own administrative centre.

Head of territorial Government: Ulu-o-Tokelau. The position rotates among the leader of each atoll on an annual basis.

Main political parties: None.

Elections: Held in January every third year. The last election was held on 23 January 2014; the next one is due to be held in January 2017. Representation in the General Fono currently stands at Atafu (7 delegates), Nukunonu (6) and Fakaofo (7).

Legislature: The unicameral General Fono, a 20-member legislature.

Economy: The principal source of revenue is assistance provided by New Zealand through budgetary support. The other major source of funding is fees from fisheries licences, with other small revenue streams from postage stamps and souvenir coins.

Monetary unit: New Zealand dollar ($NZ).

Gross domestic product per capita: US$ 1,007 (2001-2008 estimates).

Brief history: Originally inhabited by Polynesians from surrounding islands, Tokelau became a British protectorate in 1889, and in 1925, administration was transferred to New Zealand. By the Tokelau Act 1948, sovereignty over Tokelau was transferred to New Zealand.

I. Constitutional and political developments

A. Local self-governance

1. As reported in previous working papers on the question of Tokelau, the current process of constitutional development stems from the 1998 decision of the General Fono (the national representative body of Tokelau) to endorse a comprehensive report entitled "Modern house of Tokelau", which addressed the core issue that faced Tokelau in creating a constitutional framework that suited an atoll- or village-based self-governing community that respected traditional decision-making customs.

2. In accordance with the terms of the 1998 report, General Fono delegates are now elected on the basis of proportional village representation, with delegates elected through universal village suffrage rather than a system of equal village representation with delegates appointed by the respective village councils, as was previously the case. In 2004, further decisions were made on the method of appointment of the Chair of the General Fono and on the role and responsibilities of the six-person Council of Ongoing Government, which is the executive Government when the General Fono is not in session. The Council consists of three Faipule (representative of each village) and three Pulenuku (mayor of each village). The position of Ulu-o-Tokelau, or Head of Government, rotates annually among the three Faipule. In February 2014, the Faipule of Atafu took over as Ulu. In February 2015, the Faipule of Nukunonu is expected to rotate into the position.

3. In its most recent election on 23 January 2014, Tokelau elected its new General Fono (Parliament), which represents the three atolls of Tokelau (Fakaofo, Atafu and Nukunonu). According to the Ulu-o-Tokelau, it was the first time that the election had been based on common national basic criteria in all three villages. Two of the three sitting Faipule and one of the three Pulenuku lost their seats. In all, 9 of the 20 positions in the General Fono went to new candidates. Three of the positions are held by women, who each represent the Fatupaepae (Women's Committee) on each atoll. Overall, the composition of the General Fono is that of a younger, less traditional Tokelau. Saili Peau (Council Representative of Atafu) was elected and currently serves as Minister for Education of Tokelau, the first female Minister to hold that position.

4. Since 2004, the three village councils have taken full responsibility for all village public services. That decision emanated from the Modern House of Tokelau approach, whereby the traditional Council of Elders on each atoll serves as the foundation for any future governance structure. Under that arrangement, the three village councils delegate authority to the General Fono for activities that needed to be handled at the national level (see A/AC.109/2005/3). The New Zealand official with principal responsibility for relations with Tokelau is the Administrator of Tokelau, who is based in Wellington and is appointed by the New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs.

5. Jonathan Kings is the current Administrator of Tokelau and works within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in the Special Relations Unit, which is responsible for New Zealand's relationship with Tokelau (and with Niue). The Unit is staffed by officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. A member of the Tokelau Public Service works in the Office of the Administrator.

B. Referendum process

6. In 2003, the General Fono took a formal decision, with the support of all three village councils, to endorse self-government in free association with New Zealand as the choice to be actively explored with the Government of New Zealand. In August 2005, the General Fono approved a draft constitution, as the basis for the proposed act of self-determination, and the text of a draft treaty of free association between Tokelau and New Zealand. In November 2005, the New Zealand Cabinet gave its formal approval. The so-called referendum package, consisting of the draft treaty and the draft constitution, was to form the basis of the referendum on self-determination. In line with a decision by the General Fono, an overall majority of two thirds of the valid votes cast was required for a change to the status of Tokelau.

7. The first referendum on self-determination was held sequentially in Apia and on the three atolls from 11 to 15 February 2006 (see A/AC.109/2006/20). The outcome of the referendum fell short of the required two-thirds majority, with 60 per cent of valid Tokelauan votes cast in favour of self-government in free association with New Zealand. The United Nations, which formally monitored the referendum, deemed the process credible and reflective of the will of the people of Tokelau. A representative of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, accompanied by a Political Affairs Officer of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, also observed the referendum process.

8. In August 2006, the General Fono voted to hold a second referendum on Tokelauan self-determination in late 2007. The proposed constitution and the draft treaty, commonly referred to as the self-determination package, were to be the same and the legal threshold for acceptance of the proposal would remain at a two-thirds majority.

9. The second referendum was held from 20 to 24 October 2007. The result, with 64.4 per cent in favour, was again below the two-thirds threshold, thereby leaving the status of the Territory unchanged (see A/AC.109/2007/19). As with the first referendum, the United Nations formally monitored the voting, with representatives of the Special Committee and the Department of Political Affairs present as observers.

10. Following the results of the second referendum, the General Fono requested the Government of New Zealand to keep on the table the entire self-determination package (namely, the draft treaty and draft constitution that had been agreed upon and had served as the foundation for the previous ballots). The Council of Ongoing Government noted that Tokelau could in the future change the two-thirds majority threshold for the referendum, but should put in place measures to ensure that a threshold was supported by a clear majority in each village to guarantee unity. The Council of Ongoing Government also noted Tokelau's strong commitment to self-determination and its wish to have a constitution, albeit one that did not encompass the provisions for free association and self-government.

11. The outcomes of the referendums, neither of which reached the threshold of support set by the General Fono of Tokelau for a change of status, have been acknowledged and accepted by New Zealand. As a follow-up to the 2007 referendum result, the then Prime Minister of New Zealand met with the leaders of Tokelau in February 2008 to discuss the next steps in the New Zealand-Tokelau relationship. It was agreed that a "pause" should be taken in the self-determination

efforts of Tokelau and that, in the meantime, Tokelau would focus on meeting its basic needs. That remains the situation.

II. Economic conditions

A. General economic overview

12. Tokelau faces major constraints on its economic growth, including such natural disadvantages as small size, isolation, wide spread of the atolls, lack of natural resources and natural disasters, such as cyclones. The economic stability of Tokelau has so far been made possible by the high levels of assistance provided by the administering Power. With the continued assistance of New Zealand, the Council of Ongoing Government of Tokelau intends to maintain its focus on improving the delivery of core public services as part of a current joint review process, completing key infrastructure projects, such as on shipping, schools, hospitals, renewable energy and improvements in health and education, and strengthening the Council and the Tokelau Public Service.

13. As part of the new Tokelau fisheries policy aimed at maximizing the economic benefits from the sustainable use of its exclusive economic zone, Tokelau joined the Vessel Day Scheme, a mechanism allowing vessel owners to purchase and trade days fishing at sea in places subject to the Nauru Agreement. The scheme is used to constrain and reduce catches of target tuna species and increase the rate of return from fishing activities through access fees paid by distant water fishing nations. At the request of Tokelau, the Administrator has completed all formalities in order to manage the exclusive economic zone for the foreseeable future, until Tokelau is in a position to assume that responsibility.

14. On 30 November 2014, Tokelau became the first member of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency to sign the Tokelau Arrangement for the management of the South Pacific albacore fishery. The Tokelau Arrangement provides a framework for the development of cooperative zone-based management of South Pacific albacore tuna fisheries.

15. Traditional and communal values and practices play a key role in contributing to a state of general well-being and equity in the Territory, as evidenced by the *inati* system and the importance attached to upholding the concept of the family and/or the extended family. The tradition of *inati* requires the deposit at a central location of food and produce, which are then apportioned by the distributors on the basis of "share groups". The principle provides for a secure distribution system that addresses the needs of every member of the community, including the elderly, widows, single parents and children.

B. Assistance to Tokelau by the administering Power

16. In 2011, New Zealand and Tokelau signed a joint commitment for development, which set out joint priorities for the following five years, in line with the National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 of Tokelau. Development assistance since then has focused on good governance, infrastructure development, human development (especially in the areas of health and education) and sustainability.

17. Assistance was provided through budget support and through specific projects. New Zealand budget support for Tokelau for the 2013/14 fiscal year was New Zealand dollar ($NZ) 11.7 million. Key projects included transport (construction of a new passenger cargo ship, the *Matalíki*, and charter of the *PB Matua* in the interim) and ship-to-shore equipment and infrastructure. More information on the assistance provided is set out in paragraph 37 of the present report. Taking into account budget support and specific projects, total funding for 2013/14 was more than $NZ 30 million.

18. The Tokelau International Trust Fund, formally established in November 2004, was designed to provide intergenerational security and an independent source of income to Tokelau in the future. With contributions from Australia, New Zealand, Tokelau and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the level of the Fund now stands at approximately $NZ 79.7 million (estimated as at December 2014).

C. Transport and communications

19. Tokelau has no airstrips, and its main transportation option is provided by regular passenger and cargo services between Apia and Tokelau, primarily on the *PB Matua*, which was chartered by the Administrator of Tokelau in 2012. Additional charters by larger vessels are occasionally funded to meet the transport needs of Tokelau. Recognizing that the quality of the transport service linking its atolls and providing contact with Samoa is vital to Tokelau, the Government of New Zealand is supporting the construction of a new ferry that will carry up to 60 passengers and essential cargo. New Zealand is also assisting in ensuring the safe and efficient transfer of passengers and cargo from ship to shore, including the provision of new barges, safety equipment, training and upgrades to wharf infrastructure.

20. According to the administering Power, the telephone and Internet telecommunications networks of Tokelau perform poorly and are slow and expensive, contributing to its extreme isolation. There is no mobile phone network. The World Bank has recently completed a comprehensive assessment of the telecommunications governance, management and infrastructure in Tokelau and has recommended a programme of work to improve telecommunications. New Zealand is currently considering investment in information and communications technology, which is expected to have wide benefits, including in education, health, governance and economic development. Telecommunications services are provided through the Tokelau Telecommunication Corporation (Teletok). In December 2014, Teletok selected a telecommunications company to deliver satellite broadband connectivity across the territory and surrounding waters.

D. Power supply

21. In 2012, Tokelau became the first area in the world to draw power primarily from solar sources, following the completion of the Tokelau Renewable Energy Project, jointly funded by the Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau. The initiative implemented a solar photovoltaic system of large solar arrays on each of the three atolls.

22. As a Pacific Island highly influenced by climate change, Tokelau considers that its lead role and initiative in renewable energy can serve as examples for the developed world. Tokelau has generated savings in diesel of around $NZ 1 million per year, with the solar photovoltaic system supplying over 90 per cent of the country's electricity.

III. Social conditions

A. General

23. In May 2012, Statistics New Zealand and the Tokelau Statistics Unit released the final outcome of the five-yearly population census held on 18 October 2011. The main findings of the 2011 Tokelau Census of Population and Dwellings were detailed in the 2013 working paper (see A/AC.109/2013/2). Results of the population count undertaken in December 2013 can be found in the previous working paper (see A/AC.109/2014/2).

B. Education

24. Under the Tokelau compulsory education system, primary and secondary education is available to everyone up to the age of 16. There are three schools on Tokelau, one on each atoll. As one of the owners of the University of the South Pacific, Tokelau has access to a distance-learning foundation course run by the university's educational telecommunications system through a University of the South Pacific campus located on Atafu. According to the administering Power, despite support for education over the course of many years, education standards on the atolls remain relatively low, a fact that was confirmed in a February 2014 report of the Education Review Office of New Zealand. That is a key reason why significant numbers of families leave the atolls to seek improved educational opportunities for their children in New Zealand, Samoa and elsewhere.

25. As a result, New Zealand is currently embarking on a major initiative to transform primary and early childhood education in Tokelau. The $NZ 5 million investment, over the course of five years, is expected to strengthen school governance and leadership, support the professional development of teachers and principals and improve learning outcomes for students. In the long term, it is expected that New Zealand will support distance education for Tokelau. Tokelau, with funding from New Zealand, has recently completed the building of new schools on the atolls of Atafu and Fakaofo. A new school for the third atoll of Nukunonu is currently at the design stage. The Government of Tokelau announced in December 2014 that the Centre for Education Development of Massey University of New Zealand had been contracted to work with the Government and villages of Tokelau on improvements to its education services.

C. Health care

26. The provision of adequate health services to the populations of three dispersed atolls remains a major challenge for Tokelau. A new health centre on Nukunonu was

recently completed and is expected to make a strong contribution towards improved health outcomes. A second health centre on Fakaofo is currently at the design stage.

27. The major non-local sources of contributions to health care are the Government of New Zealand, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The priorities of the national health plan, which is directly linked to the Tokelau National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 are: (a) healthy islands and communities; (b) healthy lifestyles; (c) development of health partnerships; (d) development of accessible primary health-care services; (e) successful community participation; and (f) development and improvement of the health-service system.

28. According to data compiled by WHO in 2013, non-communicable disease risk factors, namely, overweight and obesity, are the major health threats, and cerebrovascular and cardiovascular diseases are the leading causes of death. The burden of disease owing to lifestyle-related factors is growing and becoming a significant problem. Obesity is common (74.7 per cent of the population) and is attributed to diet and physical inactivity. There is an observable diet shift away from local foods and towards imported foods. Tobacco and alcohol consumption is relatively high among the adult population and more prominent in males. The estimated smoking prevalence among adults in 2013 was 50 per cent. There are initiatives under way on the atolls to improve education regarding diet and nutrition. However, according to the administering Power, significant changes have yet to result. Continuous training, recruitment and retention of health-care professionals is necessary to address those growing problems and are significant challenges.

29. Tokelau has recently completed a review of the health sector, and the recommendations are currently under consideration by the Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau. In the review, Tokelau noted that the tripartite nature of its present health governance and management structure constrained the effective delivery of health services owing to service fragmentation and low levels of clinical cooperation across the atolls. It recommended a centralization of services, with the provision for health specialists who work nationally through the new health clinic in Nukunonu and under the Department of Health (rather than the village taupulega). It also recommended placing greater emphasis on promoting good health and improving the capacity of the public health sector to manage the threats of non-communicable diseases.

30. Tokelau has zero infant and maternal mortality owing to early referral of mothers for maternity care. Antenatal care coverage and coverage for child immunization is 100 per cent. Screening programmes are in place for early detection and treatment of important health issues such as screening for cervical cancer and breast cancer. The proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation facilities is 93 per cent. Access to improved drinking water sources is available to 97 per cent of the population. Tokelau has benefited from a Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change project for a more reliable and safe water system. The project, supported by UNDP and implemented by the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, aimed at improving access to clean water and installed first flush diverters on drinking water tanks in 99 per cent of households on all three of the atolls. The project also raised awareness in the communities about water and

sanitation issues and renovated or replaced water infrastructure such as pipes, guttering and water tanks.[1]

IV. External relations

31. As set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Joint Statement of the Principles of Partnership between Tokelau and New Zealand, Tokelau as a Non-Self-Governing Territory does not have an international legal personality separate from that of New Zealand that would allow it to enter into formal international legal obligations as a State in its own right. In consultation with Tokelau, New Zealand is responsible for entering into any such obligations on behalf of Tokelau. Tokelau participates in regional and international organizations in its own right, to the extent that such organizations allow.

32. Tokelau is seeking to grow its engagement with regional and international organizations. It is a member of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Pacific Community Coastal Fisheries Programme, the Council of the University of the South Pacific, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. At the forty-fifth Pacific Islands Forum, held in Koror, Palau, from 29 to 31 July 2014, participants agreed to admit Tokelau as an associate member. Tokelau is an associate member of the Pacific Community Applied Geoscience Commission and of WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. In addition to its relationship with New Zealand, Samoa is an important bilateral contact for Tokelau. Tokelau hosted the Forum Fisheries Committee in May 2014 and the tenth annual Forum Fisheries Ministerial Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Fishery Agency on 1 and 2 July 2014.

V. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

33. Speaking at the 2014 Pacific regional seminar in Fiji, the Ulu-o-Tokelau recalled that after the 2006 and 2007 referendums had failed to attain the votes necessary to achieve self-determination, New Zealand and Tokelau, as constitutional partners, had agreed to defer the question until such time as the people of the Territory were ready. The question of decolonization is linked to issues related to the quality of life, the threat of climate change and sea-level rise, and the sustainability of the small population sizes of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Tokelau turned to New Zealand first when pursuing its development aspirations and addressing the challenges of isolation, vulnerability and sustainability.

34. Speaking at the June 2014 session of the Special Committee, the Ulu-o-Tokelau said that the elections held earlier in 2014 for the General Fono and the Council of Ongoing Government had, for the first time, been based on basic, common, national criteria in all three villages. A voter education programme, supported by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment

[1] A film showcasing the results of the project can be found at www.undp-alm.org/resources/videos/pacc-tokelau-vital-health.

of Women (UN-Women), had been introduced to encourage registration and awareness among women. For the first time, a woman had been elected to the six-member Council of Ongoing Government. The Ulu-o-Tokelau informed the Special Committee that 60 per cent of the targets of the Tokelau National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 had been met, as had 50 per cent of the outcomes under the Joint Commitment for Development between Tokelau and New Zealand 2011-2015. The development efforts of the Territory focused on good governance, human resource capacity, women's empowerment, and environmental sustainability. Tokelau had won the 2014 Renewable Energy Award of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority of New Zealand for switching from diesel generators to solar panels for electricity production. The Tokelau Renewable Energy Project currently supplies 90 per cent of the electricity needs of Tokelau, making it the first area in the world to use solar power almost exclusively. Tokelau had entered into a partnership with UNDP to implement a sustainable support framework for that project.

35. In June 2013, the Ulu-o-Tokelau also informed the Special Committee that the national symbol, constitution, national anthem and national flag had been approved and ratified through efforts led by the people of Tokelau (see A/AC.109/2014/2).

36. The Ulu-o-Tokelau noted that the Territory had agreed with New Zealand to defer the question of another referendum and would continue to focus on meeting basic needs. Whereas Tokelauans were proud of their heritage as citizens of New Zealand, they also made their own distinct voice heard through participation in numerous regional and international organizations. Tokelau continued to be grateful to the Government of New Zealand for its support of initiatives that helped it to maintain its unique heritage. Discussions were under way to draft a post-2015 strategic plan.

B. Position of the administering Power

37. Addressing the Special Committee on 24 June 2014, the Administrator of Tokelau, Jonathan Kings, stated that the relationship between New Zealand and Tokelau continued to be an extremely positive one. The main challenges facing Tokelau were its extreme geographic isolation and its small population size. The Government was committed to ensuring that the population, who were New Zealand citizens, received basic services. One prominent challenge had been shipping. A safe, reliable and efficient transport service for Tokelau had been implemented. A purpose-built ship was being built at a cost of $NZ 12.5 million and would be ready in 2015. The current efforts of the Government of New Zealand have been centred on improving education and health-care delivery, despite the shortage of skills and the difficulties faced with regard to recruitment and retention of health-care professionals. A recent review of the education system had found a need for urgent action, and New Zealand was supporting Tokelau in implementing the recommendations of the review. Tokelau had agreed to increase its budget allocation for schools over time, as reflected in the National Strategic Plan 2010-2015. The Government of New Zealand would provide up to an additional $NZ 1 million per year for five years towards implementing those changes. In the fiscal year 2014/15, fisheries were expected to account for 25 per cent of budgeted revenue. Acting in close cooperation with Tokelau, the Administrator continued to be responsible for managing the exclusive economic zone of the Territory. He also stated that the Government of New Zealand would continue to focus on providing core services for

Tokelau before any further act of self-determination was considered and that he was not aware of any push for a change to the status quo. New Zealand would provide at least $NZ 19,650,000 to Tokelau in the areas of transport, education and budget support in 2014/15, and remained the Territory's largest bilateral donor.

38. Addressing the Fourth Committee on 13 October 2014, the representative of New Zealand referred to the comments made by the Administrator in his June 2014 statement to the Special Committee that the focus remained on providing core services for Tokelau before any further act of self-determination would be considered. There was no push for a change to the status quo. New Zealand continued to be the largest bilateral donor to Tokelau and remained committed to the long-term development of Tokelau.

39. It was further noted that New Zealand had continued to work closely with Tokelau to maximize the revenue generated by Tokelau from its own limited resources. The income to Tokelau from fisheries licensing in its exclusive economic zone continued to improve and was currently the largest single source of self-generated revenue in the Territory. In 2014/15, fisheries revenue was expected to provide 25 per cent of the country's budgeted revenue. New Zealand agreed to the request from Tokelau for assistance in managing its exclusive economic zone fisheries resource. The Administrator of Tokelau continued to exercise that responsibility in conjunction with Tokelau and with the assistance of the Ministry for Primary Industries of New Zealand.

40. The representative of New Zealand noted that Tokelau had taken a leading policy role in Pacific regional fisheries management by assuming chairmanship of the Forum Fisheries Agency and successfully hosting the annual Forum Fisheries Ministerial Meeting in Tokelau in 2014. That was the first time Tokelau had successfully hosted a significant regional ministerial-level event. As Chair, the Ulu-o-Tokelau also represented the Forum Fisheries Agency at the International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Apia in September 2014. Tokelau was able to share its experience of the regional management of fisheries and its considerable success in increasing returns from tuna fisheries, in particular.

41. The representative noted that, since the June 2014 statement, there were mutual concerns about the level of services being received by Tokelauans in relation to the significant amount of funding from New Zealand and the expectations of New Zealand as to what its citizens could expect to receive. In the light of those concerns, a dedicated team had been established to initiate a change management process with regard to the public services in Tokelau. Both New Zealand and Tokelau were represented on the team. It was anticipated that the process would result in a five-year plan for improving essential public services and strengthening resilience in Tokelau. The report was scheduled to be submitted for approval to the Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau in early December 2014.

42. The representative noted that New Zealand continued to value its close association with Tokelau and was resolute in supporting such remote communities of New Zealand citizens.

VI. Consideration by the United Nations

A. Consideration of the question of Tokelau by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

43. On 24 June 2014, representatives of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone made statements. The representative of Papua New Guinea, introducing a draft resolution on the question of Tokelau on behalf of his country and Fiji (A/AC.109/2014/L.15), stated that the text reflected the developments since 2013 by highlighting the free and fair democratic election held on 23 January 2014, the critical importance of climate change mitigation for the sustainable development of Tokelau, the reaffirmation of the 2008 agreement between the Government of New Zealand and Tokelau to defer the self-determination process to an appropriate time, the achievement of 60 per cent of the objectives in the National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 of Tokelau, and the intention of the General Fono to further review it to determine priorities beyond 2015. The representative of Sierra Leone commended the plan's focus on good governance, infrastructure, human development, gender equality and sustainable development. The representative of Fiji expressed support for the decision to defer Tokelau's self-determination process in order to focus on the goals of the plan. An emphasis on economic and social development needed to be part and parcel of the decolonization process.

B. Consideration of the question of Tokelau by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

44. At its 7th meeting, held on 14 October 2014, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted without a vote draft resolution VI (see A/69/23, chapter XIII) on the question of Tokelau.

C. Action taken by the General Assembly

45. At its 64th plenary meeting, on 5 December 2014, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 69/104 on the question of Tokelau.

46. In that resolution, the General Assembly:

(a) Acknowledged the decision of the General Fono in 2008 that consideration of any future act of self-determination by Tokelau would be deferred and that New Zealand and Tokelau would devote renewed effort and attention to ensuring that essential services and infrastructure on the atolls of Tokelau were enhanced and strengthened, thereby ensuring an enhanced quality of life and opportunities for the people of Tokelau;

(b) Welcomed the progress made towards the devolution of power to the three taupulega (village councils) since 2004 and noted that further discussion was planned on the recommendations of the report on the devolution review, which was compiled in 2012;

(c) Noted that New Zealand and Tokelau remained firmly committed to the ongoing development of Tokelau for the long-term benefit of the people of Tokelau, with particular emphasis on the further development of facilities on each atoll that would meet their current requirements;

(d) Recalled the adoption by Tokelau of its National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 and that the Joint Commitment for Development between Tokelau and New Zealand 2011-2015 prioritized four main development pillars, including good governance, infrastructure development, human resources capacity development and sustainable development;

(e) Acknowledged the ongoing and consistent commitment of New Zealand to meeting the social and economic requirements of the people of Tokelau, including the completion of the Tokelau Renewable Energy Project and a new shipping charter service, as well as the support and cooperation of UNDP and WHO;

(f) Commended the achievement by Tokelau in 2013 of 60 per cent of the objectives of its National Strategic Plan, including the completion of the Tokelau Renewable Energy Project with the support of the administering Power and the granting by the New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority in 2014 of the Renewable Energy Award to the Government of Tokelau;

(g) Acknowledged the need of Tokelau for continued support from the international community and its desire to become part of the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, the impacts of climate change and the protection of the environment and oceans;

(h) Noted the intention of Tokelau to further review its National Strategic Plan in order to determine development and other priorities beyond 2015 and include consideration of the issue of self-determination and how the Territory would address a possible referendum on self-determination in cooperation with the administering Power;

(i) Recalled with satisfaction the establishment and operation of the Tokelau International Trust Fund to support the ongoing needs of Tokelau and called upon Member States and international and regional agencies to contribute to the Fund and thereby lend practical support to Tokelau in overcoming the problems of smallness, isolation and lack of resources;

(j) Welcomed the cooperative attitude of the other States and territories in the region towards Tokelau and their support for its economic and political aspirations and its increasing participation in regional and international affairs;

(k) Called upon the administering Power and United Nations entities to continue to provide assistance to Tokelau as it further developed;

(l) Welcomed the positive actions taken by the administering Power to transmit to the Secretary-General, under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations, information regarding the political, economic and social situation of Tokelau;

(m) Also welcomed the commitment of both New Zealand and Tokelau to continue to work together in the interests of Tokelau and its people;

(n) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Tokelau and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

47. At the same meeting, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 69/107 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, paragraph 6 of which refers to Tokelau.